

REMARKS and ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action of October 19, 2007, the Examiner rejected Claims 11 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner stated that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the term “inferences” in Claims 11 and 17.

By the foregoing Amendments to the Claims, Claims 11 and 17 have been amended to provide antecedent basis for the term “inferences” as found therein. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 11 and 17, as amended, therefore, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is thus respectfully requested that this grounds for rejection of Claims 11 and 17 be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, all of the pending Claims 1-19 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentably obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,293,479 to Quintero et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,175,795 to Tsuda. It is respectfully requested that this rejection of the pending claims be reconsidered and withdrawn for the following reasons.

Independent Claim 1 of the present invention is drawn to configuration system featuring a user interface, wherein the user interface receives input data for a desired configuration, and a frame engine, receiving data input from the user interface, and wherein the frame engine outputs configuration data to the user interface in response to a frame-based inference of the input data. By the foregoing Amendment of the Claims, Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the frame-based inference includes examination of a hierarchical data tree structure having nodes whose components contain data relevant to various configurations and by removing appropriate portions of the data tree structure from consideration as input data is received for a desired configuration. It is respectfully submitted that this amendment of Claim 1 is fully supported by the application specification as originally filed. (See, e.g., paragraph [0050] of the application as published.)

In the Office Action, the Examiner notes that Quintero et al. teaches a design tool for product configuration that includes a knowledge base and an inference engine. The Examiner notes that Quintero et al. does not disclose use of a frame engine for performing a frame-based

inference, as featured in Claim 1. The Examiner also notes, however, that Tsuda et al. does teach use of a frame inference engine (although in a very different application), and that it would be obvious to use a frame inference engine as taught in Tsuda et al. to perform the inference engine function of Quintero et al..

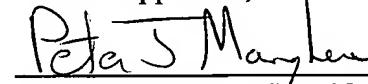
Applicant respectfully submits, however, that neither of the cited references describe or suggests a frame based inference that includes examination of a hierarchical data tree structure having nodes whose components contain data relevant to various configurations and removing appropriate portions of the data tree structure from consideration as input data is received for a desired configuration, as featured in Claim 1, as amended. Since Quintero et al. does not describe or suggest frame-based inference at all, this reference clearly could not describe or suggest such a method for conducting such an inference. It is also respectfully submitted that Tsuda et al. does not describe or suggest a method for conducting a frame based inference as featured in Claim 1, as amended.

For the foregoing reasons it is respectfully submitted that neither of the cited references, considered either separately or in combination, describe or suggest the features of Claim 1, as amended. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1, as amended, is not unpatentably obvious over the cited references, and is, therefore, in condition for allowance. Dependent Claims 2-10 depend, either directly or indirectly, from Claim 1, as amended, and incorporate the features thereof. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 2-10 also are not unpatentably obvious over the cited references, considered separately or in combination, and, therefore, are also in condition for allowance.

By the foregoing Amendment of the Claims, independent Claims 11 and 17 have been amended in a manner similar to independent Claim 1, to include a similar feature. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 11 and 17, as amended, are not unpatentably obvious over the cited references, considered either separately or in combination, for the reasons discussed above with reference to Claim 1. Dependent Claims 12-16, 18, 19, and 21 depend, either directly or indirectly, from either Claim 11 or Claim 17, as amended, and incorporate the features thereof. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are also not unpatentably obvious over the cited references, for the reasons discussed above, and are, therefore, also in condition for allowance.

Favorable action on the present application, including allowance of Claims 1-19 and 21 as amended and pending, is respectfully requested.

For the Applicant,



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